""""""Current comments"

ISI®'s Special Services Group Can Provide
Your Own Personalized
Current Contents® or ASCATopics™

March 8, 1972

The selection of journals for each of the five editions of Current Contents is a continuing arduous task. The selection attempts to provide an optimum mix of journals which can satisfy the tastes and needs of about 250,000 readers throughout the world. However, no matter how carefully we choose journals there will always be too many for some readers and too few for others. Fortunately we must be doing something right since the vast majority are quite satisfied with our coverage.

But suppose you or your organization could have Current Contents designed to cover just those journals you select? ISI can provide a custom service for you. However, selectivity in information services is like good champagne. Some people prefer champagne but most people can only afford beer or other less exotic drinks.

But suppose you could afford your own personalized version of Current Contents. You would have to select your "list of journals covered". You would then decide whether each issue should appear weekly, biweekly, or monthly. Should it contain an author address directory and/or subject index? Most of this you could get from our ASCA® service by the use of so-called "source journal" questions. Indeed many individuals do use these questions in their ASCA profiles. However, this is generally limited to a very small

number of journals. Even in ISI's ASCATopics series the number of source journal questions rarely exceeds a half dozen and these would never include such large journals as Nature, Science, Doklady, etc.

But a weekly computer printout is one thing and a special customized printed edition of CC^{\otimes} is another. So the question of a special Current Contents edition is practical only if one is talking about a group purchase. ISI has had some experience in preparing such special editions and would be glad to discuss with your organization or professional group how this might be accomplished.

Frankly the most promising areas are those which have a journal coverage which falls between two or more of our present five editions. This does not mean that a special CC edition in the field of cancer, for example, might not be useful to a large group of cancer research workers. The question is whether or not the added "selectivity" would reduce the cost sufficiently, even if purchased in quantity, when compared to a comparable purchase of individual or small-group subscriptions to Current Contents. Indeed, in most instances we have found it is cheaper for certain groups to purchase two existing editions of CC than to produce a single custom edition that eliminates overlapping coverage or eliminates the journals of little interest to most readers in a particular specialty. As the number of readers increases the need to cover more journals also increases.

In general, any group that is smaller than 100 to 200 persons could not justify a special edition of CC. Such a group would probably best be served through our ASCA Topics or what we call Multi-ASCA service. The various choices here are not simple. However, every group of readers is entitled to

obtain the best possible return on its investment in information service and ISI will do everything possible to help achieve that objective. Whether we help you select your journal list through our journal citation data bank, or provide you access to our Permuterm Index computer software, our special services group is there to help you. And whatever your choice may be, ISI's library service is always available to provide quick access to articles if they are not readily available.